

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-13

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FLAGSTAFF SUPPORTING CONGRESSMAN RAUL GRIJALVA'S PROPOSED HOUSE BILL TITLED "GRAND CANYON CENTENNIAL PROTECTION ACT" WHICH WILL ENACT A PERMANENT BAN ON URANIUM MINING ON MORE THAN ONE MILLION ACRES OF LAND AROUND THE GRAND CANYON

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, advocating for and supporting actions that lead to the advancement of social and environmental justice for the Indigenous community is a City Council goal; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of Flagstaff have historically opposed actions furthering radioactive pollution in the region, including the adoption of Resolution No. 2010-74, which expressed support for Secretary of Interior Salazar's proposal to withdraw approximately one million acres of federal lands surrounding Grand Canyon National Park from uranium mining for 20 years; Resolution No. 2245, which urged President Clinton and Congress to not transport radioactive waste from contained storage until scientific decisions are made concerning permanent nuclear waste storage and declaring Flagstaff a Nuclear Free Zone; and Resolution No. 2018-06 reaffirming Council's support of the Secretary of the Interior's 2012 order to withdraw 1,006,545 acres of federal land surrounding the Grand Canyon National Park from new uranium mining for 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 2008-09 opposes "Uranium development on lands in the proximity of the Grand Canyon National Park and its watersheds;" and

WHEREAS, the Tusayan Town Council Resolution No. 2011-03-2302 supports the 2012 Grand Canyon Mineral Withdrawal; and

WHEREAS, the Hualapi Tribal Council Resolution No. 67-2009 opposes uranium exploration and mining; and

WHEREAS, the Flagstaff City Council adopted Resolution No. 2017-38, which expresses the Council's opposition to uranium mining and the transportation of uranium ore through the City of Flagstaff and Indigenous lands in the region, and reaffirms Flagstaff as a nuclear free zone; and

WHEREAS, during the Cold War, 30 million tons of uranium ore were mined on or adjacent to the Navajo Nation leaving more than 500 abandoned mines; and

WHEREAS, many Indigenous community members already affected by living in close proximity to abandoned uranium mines are still seeking relief from radioactive waste in these areas that have remained for decades at many of the mines creating elevated levels of radiation;

WHEREAS, potential health effects of uranium mining include lung cancer from the inhalation of radioactive particles, as well as bone cancer and impaired kidney function from exposure to radionuclides in drinking water; and

WHEREAS, Congress acknowledged that radiation exposure from the mining, transport and processing of uranium has affected and continues to affect thousands of individuals and in 1990 passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) to provide compensation to individuals who have developed and are developing cancers and other serious diseases caused by uranium mining; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining threatens the Havasupai Tribe, which relies heavily upon clean and safe water of surrounding springs and the integrity of the land to sustain the physical, cultural, religious and economic needs of its people.

WHEREAS, the exploration and mining of uranium is known to cause serious, detrimental and irreversible human health and environment impacts that directly conflict with the federal government's duty to manage the public lands for the protection and preservation of the places that possess cultural, religious and historic importance to the Native people; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining in the Grand Canyon region has left a toxic legacy of polluted water, air, and soil at more than 500 highly containment mine and mill sites that remain un-reclaimed within the Navajo Nation and these sites increase the risk of disease and death of people living in communities throughout Northern Arizona; and

WHEREAS, to protect, for current and future generations, the watershed, ecosystem, and cultural heritage of the Grand Canyon region in the State of Arizona, and for other purposes is vital for the health and well-being of all; and

WHEREAS, the Grand Canyon National Park, a world heritage site located 85 miles north of the City of Flagstaff, Arizona, is an integral part of the Northern Arizona landscape and plays an integral role in the tourism economy of the City of Flagstaff; and

WHEREAS, the Grand Canyon National Park attracts nearly six million visitors per year who contribute significantly to the Flagstaff tourism economy; and

ENACTMENTS:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY FLAGSTAFF, AS FOLLOWS:

That the Flagstaff City Council affirms its support of for Congressman Raul Grijalva's proposed house bill titled "Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act," which will enact a permanent ban on uranium mining on more than one million acres of land around the Grand Canyon.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Flagstaff this 19th day of March, 2019.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

CITY ATTORNEY